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ABSTRACT

The hypothesis that teacher pupil control ideology-behavior congruence would be positively related to teacher job satisfaction was tested. The rationale for the hypothesis was that teachers whose beliefs and behaviors concerning pupil control were consistent would be likely to be contented with their work. Pupil control was seen as a central aspect of the work of teachers. Data were gathered on 95 teachers in four schools. The hypothesis could not be rejected. Additional analyses replicated past work on congruence of perceived colleague and self pupil control ideology and job satisfaction. (Authors)

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TEACHER PUPIL CONTROL IDEOLOGY-BEHAVIOR CONGRUENCE AND JOB SATISFACTION

by

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One of the earliest inquiries on job satisfaction was reported by Hoppock (1935) more than 40 years ago. It was an extensive study of job satisfaction in a variety of occupations, including teaching. Since then a host of such investigations, primarily on worker satisfaction in business and industrial organizations, have been carried out.

Two major emphases in the literature have been the examination of the relationship of demographic type characteristics such as age, experience, and sex to job satisfaction, and the search for compensations like recognition, pay, supervision, and influence, that might be associated with satisfaction. Although the studies show, for example, that pay is not a prime predictor of job satisfaction, they have not been greatly enlightening from a theoretical standpoint. Also, the area is plagued by persistent questions that elude resolution. Thus, whether job satisfaction can be treated independently of satisfaction with life (Roe, 1956) and whether job satisfaction can be considered a continuous variable with dissatisfaction at the other pole (Graen, 1968; Herzberg, et al., 1959) are matters that continue to be debated.

The present inquiry joins a line of work on the school as a social system (Willower, 1975) to that on job satisfaction as it relates to the work of public school teaching. It differs from most past research on job satisfaction in that it deemphasizes both demographic and compensation type variables to focus instead on the context of work, the social system and the organization.

Schools are organizations having a mandated relationship with their student clients; neither organization nor client can exercise choice concerning their

participation (Carlson, 1964). As is the case with other organizations having such a relationship with clients (Cressey, 1965; Perrow, 1965), a salient feature of the school's social system is a preoccupation with client control. Hence, the control of students is a central element in the work of teachers, and often is the basis upon which teaching is assessed (Willower, 1971 [a,b]).

Given the central place of pupil control in teaching, the present investigation examined the relationship of pupil control and teacher satisfaction. Specifically, it addressed the problem of whether the consistency of teacher pupil control beliefs and behavior was associated with teacher job satisfaction.

Hypothesis

One major hypothesis guided the research. It stated that teacher job satisfaction would be directly related to the congruence of teacher pupil control ideology and behavior. The rationale for this hypothesis was straightforward. It held that if an individual is able to behave in ways that are consistent with his beliefs concerning an important aspect of his work, then that individual will be more satisfied with his job.

The social system and organizational setting within which work takes place were seen as sources of constraints. These constraints essentially take the form of formal rules, organizational routines, and normative pressures. In schools pupil control is frequently the object of such rules, routines, and pressures. The work behavior of the individual represents an adaptive compromise between the constraints as they are perceived by the individual and his personal propensities regarding his work. When constraints are perceived to entail few or weak sanctions or parallel the individual's beliefs, then behavior should more nearly match beliefs and job satisfaction should be relatively high. It

was the latter relationship, that between the consistency of belief and behavior and job satisfaction, that was examined in the present investigation.

Methods

Instruments

In order to test the hypothesis it was necessary to have measures of teacher pupil control ideology, teacher pupil control behavior and teacher job satisfaction. The Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) Form, the Pupil Control Behavior (PCB) Form, and the Brayfield-Rothe Index of Job Satisfaction were the instruments used.

The PCI Form is a 20-item Likert-type device that taps respondents' beliefs on pupil control on a humanistic-custodial continuum (Willower, Eidell & Hoy, 1973). A humanistic PCI stresses an accepting, tolerant view of students and optimism concerning their ability to be self-disciplining. A custodial PCI emphasizes the maintenance of order and a distrustful, even punitive orientation toward students.

Examples of items, are "beginning teachers are not likely to maintain strict enough control over their pupils" and "being friendly with pupils often leads them to become too familiar." Reported split-half reliabilities for the instrument are above .90. Validation was tested by asking school principals to make judgements concerning the PCI of their teachers, and by sampling teachers from schools known by reputation to be especially humanistic or custodial. PCI Form scores for the various groups differed in the expected direction (Willower, Eidell & Hoy, 1973: 10-14). The scoring range on this measure is 20 to 100; the higher the score the more custodial the ideology.

The PCB Form is a companion instrument to the PCI Form in that it is also based on a humanistic-custodial continuum, but rendered in behavioral terms.

This 20-item device is completed by student respondents based on a five point scale ranging from always to never. Examples of items, prefaced by the words "my teacher," are "smiles when students are around" and "is bossy with students." The reported reliability of the PCB Form was .92 as estimated by Cronbach's alpha. Item-scale r's for the instrument averaged .81, and a one-way analysis of variance indicated that the measure differentiated among subjects while clustering within subjects. The scoring range on this instrument is 20 to 100; the higher the score the more custodial the student perception of teacher behavior. The PCB score for a given teacher is based upon the mean of student scores (Helsel & Willower, 1974).

The Index of Job Satisfaction provides a global assessment of job satisfaction. It contains 18 items in a Likert-type format. Examples of items are "my job is like a hobby to me" and "each day of work seems like it will never end." The authors reported a split-half reliability of .87. Validation was based on differences in job satisfaction found in groups expected to like or dislike their work on other grounds, and on the high correlation between the Index and the Hoppock Job Satisfaction Blank (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951; Brayfield, et al., 1957).

Sample

Data were gathered from four schools, a senior high school, a junior-senior high school, a junior high school, and a middle school located in two school districts in a northeastern state. Of the 185 teachers in the four schools, 95 or just over 50 per cent agreed to participate and provided usable returns. However, only those who taught major subjects were asked to participate. One randomly selected class of each of the teachers completed the PCB Form. A total of 2,152 usable responses were gathered, an average of 22.6 students per teacher.

Results

The major hypothesis tested was that teacher job satisfaction would be directly related to the congruence of teacher PCI and PCB. The independent variable, teacher PCI-PCB congruence, was the absolute difference between PCI and PCB scores after each distribution was converted to standard z scores with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. The differences in the standardized scores were then correlated with the job satisfaction scores.

The mean difference in the standardized scores was .918; the mean for job satisfaction was 70.4 with a standard deviation of 9.8. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was -.37, significant beyond the .01 level. Hence, the major hypothesis was not rejected.

In another analysis, seven predictor variables were run against the criterion variable, job satisfaction, using multiple regression techniques. The predictor variables were, in addition to PCI-PCB congruence, PCB, age, experience in teaching, PCI, sex, and undergraduate major. The sex variable and undergraduate preparation dichotomized as in education or outside of it were entered even though their inclusion technically violated the convention of multiple regression that data be of the interval type.

The six variables added little to the variance explained by PCI-PCB congruence. While slightly more than 13 per cent of the variance in job satisfaction was explained by the congruence variable alone, just under 18 per cent was accounted for by the multiple correlation. With regard to the correlational analyses, there were two findings of note beyond that concerning the major hypothesis. One was a simple correlation of -.28 between teacher PCB and job satisfaction, meaning that the more humanistic the PCB, the greater the job satisfaction. The other was a correlation of .30 between PCI and PCB. This

relationship was significant at the .01 level, and is consistent wit that reported in past research.

A number of additional analyses were carried out. For details see Heckert (1976). They were primarily comparisons of mean PCI, PCB, and congruence scores for various categories of teachers. There were a few findings worthy of note. The 37 English or social studies teachers in the sample were more humanistic in PCI than the 34 mathematics or science teachers. Respective means were 54.5 and 60.7 with standard deviations of 11.5 and 10.0. The t value of 2.44 was significant beyond the .05 level. Younger teachers were found to be more congruent in PCI and PCB than their older colleagues. The 67 teachers below age 40 had a mean congruence score of .80 while those 40 and older had a mean of 1.2. The t of 2.18 was significant at the .05 probability level. Amount of education was differentially related to teacher PCB. The 32 teachers with work beyond the master's degree were more humanistic than the 63 teachers holding the master's degree or less. The respective means of 44.9 and 50.5 were significantly different at the .05 level. For the total sample, the mean PCI Form score was 56.8 with a standard deviation of 10.5; for PCB the figures were 48.6 and 9.7. These findings generally are consistent with those of past pupil control studies for similar kinds of teacher samples (Willower, 1975).

Discussion

The hypothesis that teacher job satisfaction would be directly related to the congruence of teacher PCI and PCB was empirically supported in this investigation. However, in spite of the high probability that the variables examined were not associated by chance, the amount of variance accounted for was not great; a substantial amount remained unexplained.

Nevertheless, it is instructive that the consistency of teacher beliefs and behavior with regard to only one facet of the teacher's work--that of pupil control--should predict job satisfaction. This suggests the utility of a social system approach to job satisfaction. Past work that stressed the key part played by pupil control in the social system of the school provided the theoretical basis for the hypothesis tested.

Clearly an alternative conjecture couched in psychological terms is available. It is that people who are well adjusted will be consistent in most areas in belief and behavior and will be satisfied with their work, as well as with their lives. That is, the same personality type that predicts belief-behavior consistency will also predict job satisfaction. While this explanation should be taken seriously and may well account for some of the variance in job satisfaction, the results of the present inquiry point to the significance of the social context within which work occurs. The context ordinarily is rich in normative structures and social cues that can elicit and channel both the behavior and the beliefs of the worker with regard to certain aspects of work. It is knowledge of the particular social system that suggests which areas of work are paramount. This study shows that the consistency of beliefs and behavior in one such area influences job satisfaction, but its larger message is that job satisfaction research should not neglect social context.

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